



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Testimony to the House Transportation and Senate Transportation Committees
House Bill 5407
May 16, 2006

Dear Chairmen Philip LaJoy, Members of the Committees and Colleagues:

I would like to provide written testimony today for HB 5407 as the Director and Health Officer for the Midland County Department of Public Health. I also serve as a member of the Michigan Association for Local Public Health, also known as MALPH, and as an officer of the Executive Committee. MALPH represents 43 of the 45 local health departments in Michigan and has been supportive of legislation that limits tobacco exposure. I thank you for this opportunity to share thoughts regarding House Bill 5407.

Tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke are identified as the two leading causes of preventable death in Michigan, according to the Michigan Department of Community Health. These two causes of preventable death are more serious than auto accidents, suicide, drug overdose, alcohol, fire deaths and even AIDS deaths.

Our Michigan children are truly a treasure and a gift from God. We must make reasonable precautions to provide protection for our children from health threats so that they have the opportunity to thrive and become the future leaders of this great State. It is easy to offer support for HB 5407 because it offers protection for children to the unwanted exposure of secondhand smoke. Although the Bill has been modified to only cover children to the age of four, these are the most susceptible children and least able to speak for themselves. This language change should make enforcement easier, since children to age four are required to be in car seats.

As a local health department official, I have a sworn duty to represent my community under Michigan's Public Health Code (Act 368 of 1978), and a statutory responsibility for protecting the public's health. Successful efforts to improve public health also improve the quality of life of the people living in a community. HB 5407 provides an opportunity for such improvement. Please consider this bill an opportunity to make a positive impact for the youngest children of Michigan.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact me with any questions or comments.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Michael Krecek".

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